

RESOLUTION NO. _____, SERIES 2008

A RESOLUTION NAMING THE INTERSECTION OF FOURTH AND MUHAMMAD ALI “THOMAS MERTON SQUARE” AND DECLARING MARCH 18, 2008 TO MARCH 18, 2009 AS “THE YEAR OF THE EPIPHANY.”

Sponsored by: Councilman David Tandy

WHEREAS, Thomas Merton (1915-1968) has been recognized as one of the most influential American Spiritual and Religious authors of the twentieth century. His autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, has sold many millions of copies and has been translated into over fifteen languages. He wrote over eighty other books and hundreds of poems and articles on topics ranging from monastic spirituality to civil rights and nonviolence; and

WHEREAS, on December 10, 1941, Thomas Merton entered the Abbey of Gethsemani, a community of monks located in Nelson County, Kentucky belonging to the order of the Cistercians of the Strict Observance (Trappists) where he was given the name Father Louis; and

WHEREAS, on March 18, 1958, on the corner of Fourth and Walnut Streets, now Fourth Street and Muhammad Ali Boulevard, Merton had a vision of oneness with all people of which he wrote:

In Louisville, at the corner of Fourth and Walnut, in the center of the shopping district, I was suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I loved all those people, that they were mine and I theirs, that we could not be alien to one another even though we were total strangers. It is a glorious destiny to be a member of the human race ... there is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun; and

WHEREAS, this epiphany set the agenda for the remainder of Thomas Merton's life as he wrote about the major issues facing humanity, including racism, religious diversity, war and ecology; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Merton through his writings gives us all a message of hope as we face the challenges presented in our lives, our community and our world; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Merton died on December 10, 1968 – twenty-seven years to the day after he joined Gethsemani; and

WHEREAS, even after his death, the Thomas Merton Center on the Bellarmine University campus continues to nurture and grow Merton's international reputation; and

WHEREAS, the intersection of Fourth Street and Muhammad Ali Boulevard has become synonymous with Thomas Merton and his March 18, 1958 epiphany, which lead to his personal transformation. Visitors come from all over the world to visit this place; and

WHEREAS, the naming of this intersection Thomas Merton Square is fitting and proper and will not require that any current street name be changed; and

WHEREAS, the designation of March 18, 2008 to March 18, 2009 “The Year of the Epiphany” will provide a time for the people of Louisville and world to reflect on the life and works of Thomas Merton.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE LOUISVILLE/JEFFERSON COUNTY METRO GOVERNMENT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION I: The following is hereby approved:

1. The intersection of Fourth Street and Muhammad Ali Boulevard shall be known as Thomas Merton Square.
2. March 18, 2008 to March 18, 2009 shall be declared “The Year of the Epiphany.”

SECTION II: This Resolution shall take effect upon its passage and approval.

Kathleen J. Herron
Metro Council Clerk

Jim King
President of the Council

Jerry E. Abramson
Mayor

Approval Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

Irv Maze
Jefferson County Attorney

BY: _____

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